

of this root, all the hills on these islands had an appearance as if rooted up by pigs.

At daylight I despatched the Vincennes' first cutter and the Leopard to survey the small islands in their route towards Malolo, where I had ordered a rendezvous with the brig; and with the tender and Peacock's first cutter I took the inner islands and shoals. The former passed to the right of Waia Island, while the latter took the left side.

Waia is the highest and most broken island of this group, its peak being about sixteen hundred and forty-one feet above the level of the sea. Connected with it are Waialailai and Waialailaithake, all very rugged and broken. On the latter I landed, and succeeded, after some difficulty, in getting to the top of one of its rocky peaks, which I called Observatory Peak. At the first view it appeared almost inaccessible, but in making the attempt, we found that the difficulties fortunately diminished as we neared the top. We found the ascent very fatiguing, encumbered, as we were obliged to be, not only with our instruments, but with fire-arms, for it was very necessary to keep constantly on our guard against attacks by the natives. On landing, we had thought that this island was uninhabited, but we were not long on the top before we saw several natives keeping a close watch upon us. This constant necessity of keeping on one's guard for fear of surprise was not a little harassing, and made my anxiety for the parties very great. The more knowledge I obtained of the natives, the less was I disposed to trust them.

The Waia Islanders are said to be quite independent of any authority except that of their own chiefs. All endeavours made to subjugate them have proved unavailing; and they keep themselves retired within their own fastnesses, avoiding communication with the other natives, except when they occasionally make an incursion, with a strong force, on the defenceless towns of other islands. From their cruel conduct on these expeditions, they have obtained, even from their cannibal neighbours, the name of savages. The island is said to be fruitful, but I can hardly credit the assertion, for it seems little better than a craggy rock: it is thought to contain three thousand inhabitants. It is surrounded by a few patches of coral reef, but not enough to afford it a harbour. The western sides of the islands are very much worn by the sea, in consequence of there being no sea-reef to protect them from the full swell of the ocean, in the storms which at certain seasons rage here with violence.

The observations from Observatory Peak were quite satisfactory, for we were fortunate in having very clear weather, so that we had all